



## FACT SHEET

### Carcass Disposal Overview

Proper disposal of carcasses is important both to prevent livestock disease transmission and protect air and water quality. Options for disposal include composting, incineration, burial, rendering and other methods permitted by the Minnesota Board of Animal Health.

#### General Rule Summary

- Carcasses must be disposed of as soon as reasonably possible i.e. within 48-72 hours.
- Burying requires that the carcass be 5 feet above the high water level and covered with 3 feet of dirt. Sandy or gravelly areas or area within 10 feet of bedrock should be avoided.
- Incineration requires an incinerator that is approved by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.
- Carcasses or discarded animal parts must be in vehicles or containers that are leak-proof and covered. The vehicles need to be inspected and have a permit, unless the vehicle belongs to the owner of the animal before its death.
- Composting must be done according to the protocol set forth in Board of Animal Health Rule 1719.4000.
- Carcasses left at an off-site pickup point must be in an animal-proof enclosed area that is at least 200 yards from a neighbor's buildings. Carcasses must be picked up within 72 hours, unless the enclosed area is refrigerated; then the carcass may be left for 7 days.

#### Composting

Place the carcass on an impervious pad in layers of a carbon source (sawdust, woodchips etc), nitrogen (manure) and water to allow the natural heating process to break down the carcass. Composting is allowed for swine, sheep, goats and poultry without a permit. A permit from the Board is required for cattle, horses and exotic animals.

#### Incineration

Carcasses can be placed in an incinerator approved by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and burned. The resulting ashes could be disposed of in a landfill, spread or buried.

#### Burial

Identify a suitable location to bury the carcass where the decomposition released will not affect ground water quality. Burial is most ideal for small amounts of material.

#### Rendering

Rendering companies collect carcasses to create a recyclable feed product. As of October, 2009 cattle over the age of 30 months rendered into animal food products must first have the brain and spinal cord removed. Service availability is limited.

**For more specific information about carcass disposal rules please see Minnesota Statute 35.82, Board of Animal Health Rules 1719.0100-1719.4600 as well as regulations set by MPCA and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. For assistance with carcass disposal contact the Board office at 651-296-2942. If there is an emergency disposal issue after regular business hours, please call the Minnesota Duty Officer at 800-422-0798.**